

Hillandale



Journal of the
City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

DECEMBER 1982 No. 129

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This seasonal card by John Haskins was sent in by John Stannard.

The E.M.G. HAND - MADE GRAMOPHONE

267, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.1 Phone: HOLBORN 1753

An Ideal Christmas Present for Yourself or Your Friends

Since winning the Silver Medal at Steinway Hall, the E.M.G. has been further improved, and we maintain that the new E.M.G. is the best proposition ever offered to the music-loving public—both in actual performance and value for money

*There must be something
in the E.M.G.*

50, Pinner Road,
Watford,
Herts.

Dear Sirs,

I received the E.M.G. Hand-made Gramophone on Saturday, the 25th inst. I have never found (after 25 years' experience) a gramophone to equal the E.M.G.

The reproductions are faultless and the machine itself is a splendid piece of workmanship.

Wishing you every success,

Yours faithfully,

A. E. WOODWARD.

□ □ □

The actual performance of every model E.M.G. is *exactly the same*. The difference in price being for more powerful motors and more elaborate cabinet work, every model unconditionally guaranteed.

Specialities.

□ □

The E.M.G. Seymour Sound Box, with real Hornite diaphragm, 25/-. The E.M.G. Scratchless Steel Needles, 2/- per 200. Each needle can be used six times. Thorens and Collaro (British) Motors at lowest prices.

Every model being hand-made throughout, intending customers should place their orders as early as possible for delivery before Christmas



If you want perfect Fibre needle as well as steel needle results, try the E.M.G.

*Come and hear it and you
will admit that there is.*

(Fibre Needles.)

The Gables,
Beach Road
Heacham.
Norfolk.

Dear Sir,

I have tried over many kinds of records and I must say that the E.M.G. is a revelation. It is hard to say which kind of record is most improved. The volume is far greater than I used to get from my—. In some of my orchestral records, I have now heard for the first time a vast number of notes which I did not know existed.

Yours sincerely,

MARTIN KINDER.

□ □ □

MODEL
B

Dear Sirs,

Having fully tested the E.M.G. with all types of needles and records, I have no hesitation in saying that for Clarity of Tone and Perfectly Natural Reproduction, your machine is absolutely unequalled. I can fully recommend the E.M.G. to all lovers of real music, either Classical or Dance.

Yours faithfully,

LESLIE HENSON,

Height - - 46"
Width - - 22 1/2"
Depth - - 24 1/2"

Best quality Thorens
Motor

Price £25

Best quality Collaro
British Motor, £2 extra

EASY TERMS CAN BE ARRANGED

Other Models—Model A - - £30

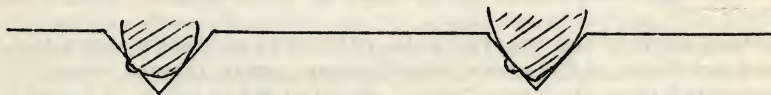
Model de Luxe £45

This dissertation is not concerned with the effects of record wear - a separate subject - but only with records in relatively unworn state. Surface noise is noise made by the record material, and is independent of the recorded signal. In essence, it is due to irregularities in the material, and there are two main types:

1. Rather large undulations, not uncommon in laminated records, appearing as an 'orange peel' effect. The result on playback is a low-frequency roar, for which the only practicable treatment is to reduce the bass response by tone control and/or filter.
2. Small pinpricks in the surface, easily seen with a magnifying glass and sometimes with the naked eye. These are in fact tiny pits which may have resulted from chemical attack, or else represent air bubbles in the original record material (not common). On playback, these produce high-frequency hiss over a fairly high waveband. Reduction of treble response by tone-control and filter is the most common correction attempted, but in general there is more to be gained by appropriate choice of pick-up and stylus.

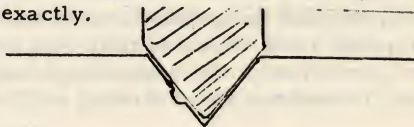
Closer examination of the pits reveals a fact I have never seen commented upon in the technical press, and yet it provides a clue to a most valuable and effective approach to the problem. It is that the pits are nearly all smaller in size than the groove depth, i.e. they do not in general extend all the way up the walls.

It is widely believed among technicians that the signal to noise **ratio** for a given disc is a fixed quantity, and that apparent differences in the performance of different pickups can be attributed to shortcomings in the response of the pickups themselves. In other words, the pickup with the best signal to noise performance is assumed to be deficient in treble response. My previous paragraph shows how they may be wrong.



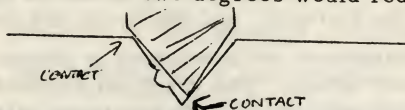
In the two diagrams above, a typical pit is being traced by two different diamond styli, one a normal hemispherical tip, the other a Shibata type. It is evident that the second does not penetrate the pit so deeply, and therefore does not generate so much noise.

Further increases in the radius of curvature of the contact surfaces of the stylus would evidently continue the improvement, and one might consider a v-shaped stylus, cut to fit the angle between the groove walls exactly.



It would be necessary to truncate the tip, since the very bottom of the average groove usually has some slight irregularities, but it appears that at this stage the stylus would no longer be capable of responding to the pit at all!

Unfortunately, it doesn't work like that, because there are practically insuperable difficulties in aligning the stylus to be exactly vertical to the record surface as viewed from the front. An error of one or two degrees would reduce the actual points of contact dramatically:



Noise, distortion and probably wear too would ensue.

There is however a way of gaining most of the benefits of the v-stylus without paying too high a price. It is to use a stylus of material soft enough to bed down and fit the groove - the thorn or fibre needle.

It may be objected that the relatively large tip of a thorn will have difficulty in tracing the higher frequencies, but in practice one finds that up to 14 KHz - at least at the beginning of a record side - will reproduce. No pre-war recordings, and only a percentage of post-war ones, contain frequencies higher than this.

Occasionally, a particular diamond stylus will be found to fit one or two particular records very well, and even outperform the thorn, but in general it is the thorn which gives the best signal to noise ratio.

Other advantages are that record wear is practically non-existent under clean conditions, and that one does not have to remember which needle to use with a given record. It can also actually assist in cleaning dirt out of a groove!

The main disadvantage is that of tip breakdown (still without harming the record), but this is mainly a function of pickup design and tuning.

Turning again to the record itself, collectors generally agree that the smoothest surfaces are those of Columbia New Process, some Victor, some VSM (French HMV) and most HMV Calcutta (Dum-Dum). In all of these cases, a purer form of shellac, with less filler, has been used. The Columbia New Process and VSM have a surface coating of such high-grade material, while others use a good 'mix' throughout. On the other hand, British HMV have a rather poor reputation among collectors, because many copies found have a high degree of pinpricking in the surface. Around 1927, the Company advertised that their records were 'silent surface', and yet today we find that most copies of that vintage are appallingly noisy!

Recently through the good offices of Alan Kelly I was able to acquire several hundred records from the early post-war period, which happened to have been stored under ideal conditions. On comparing them with apparently similar copies in my possession, I found the overwhelming majority had noticeably better surfaces. (Let

me reiterate that I am not discussing cases of worn records). I have come to the conclusion that most records as manufactured had good surfaces and that the pin-pricking is the result of subsequent chemical attack or degeneration. Such attack is evidently directed at the filler materials and not the shellac, since Columbia New Process, for example, suffers hardly at all with age in this respect.

According to an American treatise published some years ago, there are constituents in most sleeve materials which may be able to attack a record. All that is needed is a certain amount of dampness to start it off. It seems we should pay a lot more attention to this subject before our precious collections suffer any further. One slight crumb of comfort is that as a rule the deterioration goes so far and then stops unless storage conditions are particularly bad. It is possible that types of sleeve may have an influence on record deterioration. Some materials will hold moisture more than others, and it is known that they vary in acidity, for example. If collectors should find any relationship between the surface condition of their records and the type of container, I hope they will report it.

In conclusion, we know what surface noise is, but there is much to be learnt yet about surface preservation and the effect of storage conditions. As for playing, all will agree that they want the best possible signal to noise ratio. It is the author's belief that this is best achieved by use of thorn or fibre needles in properly tuned pickups or soundboxes. By this means, less spurious noise signal is generated at the pickup in the first place; a better scheme than relying on filters alone. With the thorn, one can still have the benefit of electronic correction to get even better results. And wear is practically non-existent.

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The above was given as a talk by Ian Cosens to the Yorkshire branch of the Society in August 1981. The talk concluded with a demonstration of the effect on surface noise of using different sizes of diamond stylus in the same pickup and on the same record, followed by that record being played with a specially tuned pickup and thorn needle feeding into a specially compensated pre-amplifier. A final demonstration was given of a very late 78 orchestral recording (DB 21464: Kubelik/Philharmonia) made about 1951, played with the above combination via a Sugden A48 amplifier and Bowers and Wilkins Model 70 loudspeakers. All agreed that the available treble was in excess of requirements, while surface noise was commendably low, being unobtrusive in even the quietest passages.

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ILLUSTRATIONS in this issue: we resume our series of Edison Bell advertisements with a January 1909 announcement of the Chrystol records (the 'h' was later dropped), followed by a bit of back-peddalling in February with an attempt to clear out remaining stocks of the long-obsolete 5-inch cylinders, following a factory fire. How would Members today love to buy 12 Concert cylinders for 12s.? Later in the same year, they were offering Hawthorne and Sheble 'Star' machines at cut rates. From a later period are ads. for one of the first E.M.G.s and a rather complex Decca.

# THE EDISON BELL CHRYSTOL RECORDS

ARE IN COURSE OF  
MANUFACTURE.

And will be issued shortly. Some time is necessary to adapt the necessary machinery to their production, but we think we are justified in asking a little patience for a few weeks to produce that which is said to have taken 20 years in America.

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The records will play 5 to 6 minutes and will only cost  
**ONE SHILLING.**

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Particulars of our December and **CHRISTMAS** Records have been fully advertised in all the papers devoted to Talking Machines.

For full particulars apply to any dealer or direct to ourselves.

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## JANUARY ISSUE of BELL DISCS NOW READY.

- |                                                                                                                     |                                                               |                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 68 Rule Britannia and God save the King<br><i>London Regimental Band</i>                                            | 96 What a very, very dreadful thing<br>Laughing all the day   | <i>W. W. Whitlock</i><br>"                           |
| Auld Lang Syne<br><i>T. F. Kinniburgh</i>                                                                           | 97 Ayesha, my sweet Egyptian<br>Love me and the World is mine | <i>Fred Vernon</i><br><i>Arthur Grover</i>           |
| 87 Thora ('Cello solo)<br>For You<br><i>Ludwig Lebell</i><br><i>Arthur Grover</i>                                   | 98 Love's old sweet song<br>Because                           | <i>Phyllis Lett</i><br><i>Arthur Grover</i>          |
| 88 Carnation<br>Far away in Australia<br><i>Arthur Clifford</i><br>" "                                              | 99 Down where the Poppies grow<br>At the Races                | <i>Harry Bluff</i><br>" "                            |
| 93 The Better Land<br>Heart bow'd down<br><i>Miss Phyllis Lett</i><br><i>Wilfrid Platt</i>                          | 100 A Happy New Year Schottische<br>Merry Christmas Polka     | <i>London Concert Orchestra</i><br>" " "             |
| 94 Dreams of Ragtime (Cake Walk)<br>I'll prove that I'm right<br><i>London Concert Orchestra</i><br><i>Sam Mayo</i> | 101 Hail Smiling Morn<br>The Children's Home                  | <i>Edison Bell Quartette</i><br><i>Arthur Grover</i> |
| 95 Havana Selection<br>Oh, oh, hear the wild winds blow<br><i>Royal Military Band</i><br><i>Wilfrid Platt</i>       |                                                               |                                                      |

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EDISON BELL, 39, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.  
(January 1909) 122



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the previous A. G. M. were approved and, under Matters Arising, Colin Johnson reported that his enquiries about the possibility of a visit to Broadcasting House had met with a refusal.

The Chairman reported that the Society continued to flourish, and recorded in particular the inclusion of two practical demonstrations in the year's programmes. The Treasurer reported that the Society's financial position was stronger than last year, but pointed out that much of the surplus showing on the balance sheet was already earmarked for the magazine and other printing projects. Mrs. E. A. Legge had examined the books and found them to be true and accurate.

The Committee and Officers were re-elected, there being no resignations or alternative nominations. The Chairman repeated his willingness to stand down from either or both of his posts should anyone else be nominated at any time. The position of Meetings Organiser (not necessarily an Officer or Committee Member) remains unfilled and a volunteer is urgently required; the job could be shared between two people. Programmes were agreed for most of the forthcoming year's meetings in London, as follows:

|           |                              |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| November  | Ted Cunningham               |
| December  | Barry Raynaud/Free-for-all   |
| January   | Len Watts                    |
| February  | To be announced              |
| March     | Len Petts                    |
| April     | Geoff Edwards                |
| May       | Colin Johnson                |
| June      | Frank Andrews                |
| July      | John McKeown                 |
| August    | George Frow                  |
| September | Peter Martland (provisional) |
| October   | A. G. M.                     |

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: in answer to a question from the floor, it was reported that membership stands at around 615 - 620. Colin Johnson expressed his thanks to the Officers of the Society, particularly George Frow and Christopher Proudfoot, for assistance in preparing a series of programmes for Radio Medway called "The Talking Machine". The first was to be broadcast on November 26th at 2 pm, and fortnightly thereafter (there were five programmes in all). Colin Johnson was also keen to establish a branch of the Society in the Kent area. He lives on the Isle of Sheppey.

Frank Andrews reported that Jim Dennis had been ill, and it was agreed that a letter should be written conveying the Society's wishes for a speedy recovery.

It was pointed out that the Committee had agreed to a suggestion from Mike Field

that the Regional Reports should be incorporated in the magazine as a single page, written in the form of an edited round-up rather than printed verbatim. This would reduce the amount of loose inserts sent out with the magazine, and would concentrate on those regional activities which seemed to be of general interest. This system will be tried as from the February 1983 issue, and all regional reports should now be sent to Mike Field [REDACTED]

Dave Roberts had agreed to take on the Almanac again, and asked that all information for it should be sent to him direct. He asked for suggestions for a new title, but after discussion it was decided to retain the existing name.

The President proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and Committee for the hard work they put into keeping our hobby alive. The Chairman in his reply reiterated his willingness to stand down having been Chairman now for a number of years, but Len Petts pointed out that the Gramophone Company had had the same Chairman from 1901 until 1929.

Apologies for absence were received from Barry Williamson, who sent in a report of Phonoparts' performance in the year past. This showed a loss, due to a reduction in the size of many orders at a time when much money had been invested in extending the range of products. Further investment would be halted until sales had caught up. The Meeting agreed that the Society would be willing to assist Phonoparts should the need arise.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed and the Members then adjourned for tea, generously provided by John McKeown.

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After tea, a programme of video films and extracts was shown. These included the film of Edison the Man, portrayed by Spencer Tracy and two documentaries, one on Edison films and one on Pathé films. There was a glimpse of a phonograph from the film The Railway Children and in Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines the French team played 'Frere Jacques' and La Marseillaise outside their hangar every morning on a Pathé phonograph. John McKeown showed the opening of a D'Oyly Carte performance of H. M. S. Pinafore and introduced it by tracing the history of recordings of the operetta from 7-inch Berliners onwards.

We would like to record our thanks in particular to John McKeown, who not only has to look after the Society's finances throughout the year, but also acts as host for the Annual General Meeting and somehow finds time to lay on some of the entertainment as well.

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EDISON BELL CONCERT RECORDS

The best of all reproducers of sounds,
Bands—Songs—Orchestras—Speeches.

WE HAVE 10,000 IN STOCK. Perfect in every respect. Quite new. Highest quality of classical and popular selections.

Original Price 10/- each.

WE ARE NOW OFFERING THEM TO CLEAR AT
12 SHILLINGS PER DOZEN.

REMEMBER.

These are **CONCERT** Records, 5-inches in diameter, to be played on Edison Concert and Edison Bell Duplex Machines.

There is no recorded music gramophone or phonograph, to equal them in beauty and purity of tone.

LIST OF TITLES ON APPLICATION.

NOTE.

EDISON BELL Record Moulding will be re-commenced in a few days, and the effects of the recent disastrous Fire will be overcome in the course of a very short time. We ask the indulgence of our friends who are unable to obtain the particular subjects they desire.

Meantime apply for what you want, we have a stock of 500,000 records containing about 2,000 titles—We can supply a very great number.

Address—

EDISON BELL, 39, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON.

(February 1909)

BROADCAST

THE STORY OF A RECORD.

The Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd. came into existence in 1925 by acquiring the record and gramophone business of the Aeolian Co. Ltd. of Bond Street, the business and patents of World Record Ltd. of Mortlake and the record factory of the Universal Music Co. Ltd. at Hayes, Middlesex. For the next two and a half years this new company kept the Aco records on the market and continued the Aeolian Vocalion repertoire under the new name 'Vocalion'. For a short time they produced some more World records under the new name of Vocalion Long Playing Records (these were originally going to be called Vocalion Four-in-One). There was also sub-contract work and records made in this way included Beltona, Scala and Woolworth's 'Little Marvel'.

With added facilities at the Hayes factory, production increased by 60% during the first year, in spite of the unlooked-for innovation of electrical recording from both Columbia and HMV. Vocalion did not meet this until April 1926, when they took a five-year exclusive licence with Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co. Ltd. to use its electrical recording system. In May 1927 a daughter company was formed in Australia at Richmond, Melbourne, and this firm took over the production of Vocalion records formerly pressed by others.

With profits down by almost a half during its second year of trading, the Vocalion company took the decision to abandon the manufacture of 10-inch and 12-inch discs and to concentrate their efforts on a new 8-inch record with a finer groove pitch, which would play as long as a 10-inch disc. Thus in June 1927 the Broadcast records were launched.

The introduction of this record caused the biggest upset in the trade since Columbia and HMV had put out the Phoenix and Cinch records at 1s. 1d. in September 1913. The Gramophone Dealers Association resolved that "The same constitutes a menace to the legitimate retail trade": the records were priced at only 1s. 3d. and the trade papers condemned the disc out of hand and would not accept advertisements or publish release data. Dealers were recommended from all sides not to handle this "undesirable record".

Another bone of contention for the established trade was the type of channel through which the new disc was being sold: chain stores, cheap bazaars, stationers like W. H. Smith and even cash chemists such as Boots. To crown it all, the Co-operative Societies were taking the recordings under their own exclusive label, which the dealers abhorred as the dividends which the societies paid to their customers amounted to price cutting, an activity legally discouraged by record manufacturers.

At 1s. 3d. and with a three-minute playing time, the Broadcast record had found a new market. The demand quickly outstripped the Hayes factory's capacity. Dealers began to see that the rapid turnover more than made up for the smaller profit margin

and began to stock them.

One of the consequences of the demise of the Aco and Vocalion records after July 1927 was the disappearance of most of the sub-contract work: only Beltona, Linguaphone, Duophone, National Gramophonic Society and Homophone continued with other makers.

More equipment, valued at £20,000, was installed at the Hayes factory where overtime working and night shifts became necessary, for between one and one-and-a-quarter million discs were being made per month. The 10s. shares were being quoted as high as 50s., although no dividend had been paid the previous year, when the standard size records were in production. Stockbrokers were now estimating profits from the Broadcast to be 100,000 per annum. By the end of January 1928 the plant's capacity had been increased by 50%. The Broadcast record was put on sale in Australia in the same month, but was there priced at 2s.

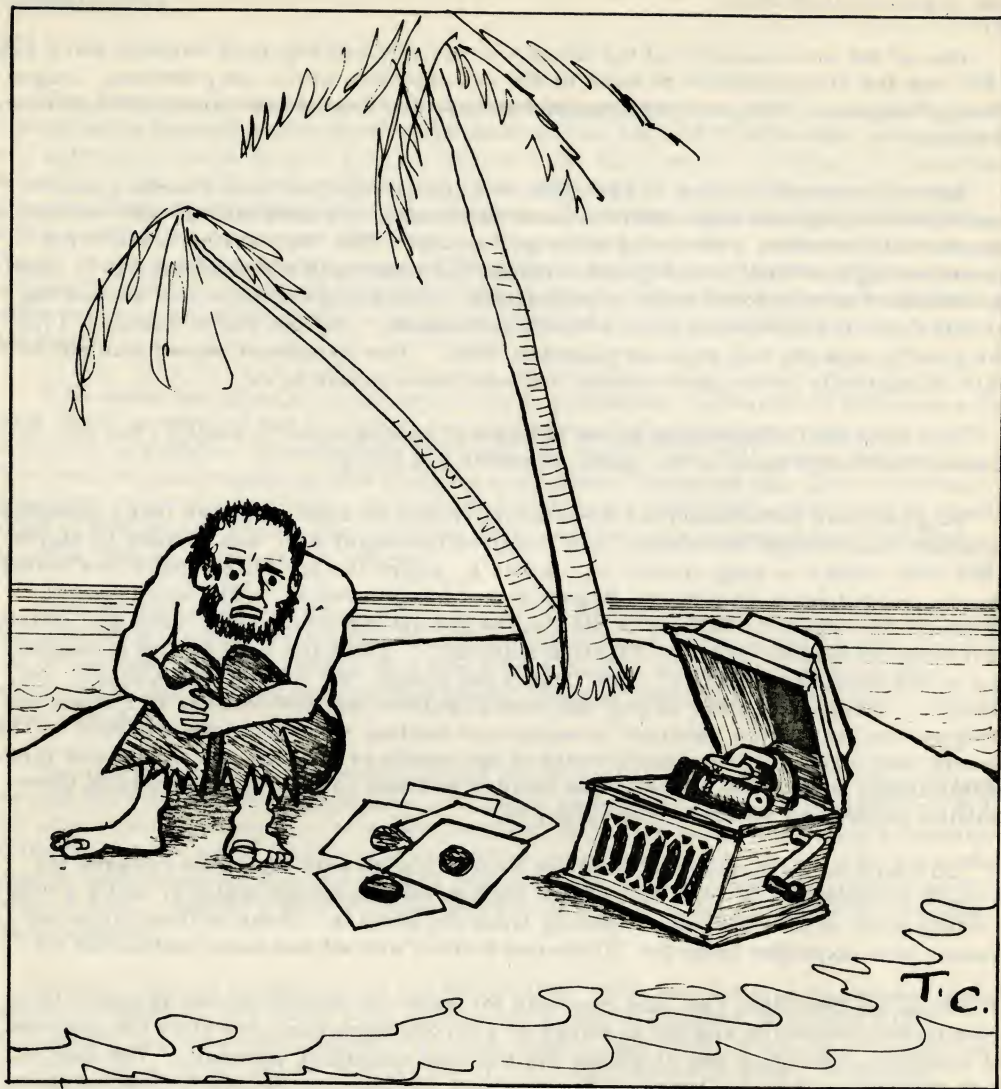
The first real competition to the Broadcast record came in March 1928 with the Edison Bell Radio disc, of the same diameter and price.

So great was the demand for Broadcasts from overseas countries that a subsidiary company was thought necessary, and Vocalion (Foreign) Ltd. was formed in March 1928 with offices in King Street, St. James's, where the parent company was installed (having moved from its original Regent Street headquarters). The new company acquired the leasehold factory in Melbourne and all the stocks of records and matrices including the former Aco and Vocalion material. It had the right to sell throughout the world except for the U.K., the Irish Free State, the U.S.A. and Canada, and Russia. They guaranteed to sell one-and-a-quarter million records in France and Belgium and to fulfill a contract to supply one million records to West Africa. The parent company was committed to help in the supply of records and to this end further installations were made at the Hayes factory in order to meet a guarantee of three million records to Vocalion (Foreign) Ltd.

The Australian factory had recently been equipped with the latest presses for 8-inch, 10-inch and 12-inch discs from British and American makers, and a refrigerating plant to cool the water coming from the presses. Four million discs per annum were expected from the Richmond factory and all had been contracted for.

Vocalion (Foreign) Ltd. had requests for sales or manufacturing agencies from 39 different countries and net earnings of £55,000 were expected after the payment of royalties, including one of 3% for the Marconi recording process. The sum of £40,000 was paid to the Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd. for this part of its business plus 40,000 fully paid up shares; the shares on offer to the public were over-subscribed by fifteen times the total on offer. The new company also had the use of factories in Belgium, France and Germany.

A tentative offer had been made for ten million Broadcasts which, it was hoped, would come from a factory to be erected in Burmah; this was to be its annual output.



Some day, Roy Plomley, I'm
going to get you for this !

By June 1928 Broadcasts were selling in China, Italy and France (where W. H. Smith had the sales agency).

As in the U.K. there was opposition to the Broadcast discs in Australia. Brunswick, Columbia, HMV and Parlophone interests decided on concerted action against the new competition and jobbers and dealers began pledging themselves not to handle the line.

It was a different story in the U.K. by then, for over 1000 HMV dealers were stocking Broadcasts. Despite criticism for rapid wear on the innermost grooves, the records were selling very well, especially those for dancing. Over £100,000 profit was made in the third year of trading.

Exactly one year after discontinuing 10-inch records, Vocalion re-introduced the size with the Broadcast Twelve, so called because it was projected to play as long as a 12-inch disc. It had a blue label, a 5000 catalogue series and a price of 2s.

In Australia the Broadcast was an undoubted success and HMV was forecasting an adverse effect on its own sales, although dealers were said to be finding new customers for HMV among those who had begun with Broadcast. And the continuing success of the records in Britain was reflected in the fact that, by September 1928, 50% of HMV dealers were stocking Broadcast. Marks and Spencer were selling 90,000 a week and Boots had sold a million during the previous twelve months. In the next month, further competition for the 1/3d. record came with the new 10-inch Dominion Record at the same price.

No profits were being made by Vocalion (Foreign). In Belgium it had joined forces with the Chantal company of Ghent, forming Vocalion-Chantal S.A. Another company was formed in Germany, called Orchestrola-Vocalion G.m.b.H., a combination of Clausophon A.G. and the associated Adler Phonograph A.G. businesses with factories in Berlin and Thalheim. Imported Broadcasts and home-recorded German artists were put on sale in both sizes of discs. As in Britain and Australia, retaliation ensued from the competition and the Columbia-controlled Lindström company and the Polyphonmusikwerke began producing their own brands of cheap record.

Both sizes of Broadcast were being sold in Spain, where it was reported that the popular Sardanas and Zarzuelas were to be recorded, and that a survey was being made for the erection of a factory. The records were on sale in Vienna and in France, where the new Vocalion (France) company had taken over from W. H. Smith and was re-formed as the Société Anonyme Disques Broadcast at Boulevard Hausmann in Paris. Broadcasts were also selling in Bombay and Calcutta.

A new company formed in June 1928, Picture Gramophone Records Ltd. was also supplied with 8-inch master recordings by Vocalion, which were limited to not more than 25 titles a month: this company's business was taken over by the Goodson Gramophone Record Co. Ltd. in December. It was in that same month that the small X-prefixed Broadcast discs were introduced. (The 8-inch size had already been

supplemented by a Scottish series with 'S' prefixed numbering.) The Inner Circle line of the London Underground had now installed kiosks on some of its stations which played Broadcast records for the delight of passengers.

The French company's factory was expected to be in production in January 1929, the Belgian factory, in spite of losses, had been modernised, and the Melbourne factory had augmented its output.

Woolworth's, who had been supplied with Vocalion's Little Marvel records until about September 1928, had taken on the Victory records made for them by Crystalate. Vocalion accordingly introduced its own labelled 6-inch discs in February 1929, known as Junior Broadcast. There were eighteen discs in the first issues, with a 'J' prefixed catalogue number; they were described as 'Super Six' records. The 8-inch Broadcasts were now experiencing reduced sales due to the established competition of Radio records and the 10-inch Dominions. A further set-back was Marks and Spencer's decision, in April 1929, to stock the 10-inch Imperials instead of Broadcasts.

In July 1929 the new Broadcast Super Twelve Dance records were announced, to be sold at 2s., although when they went on sale in September the price was only 1s. 6d. These 10-inch records had a 2,500 catalogue series and, mainly, orange labels.

In the mean time, Vocalion had been investing in other companies, much to its detriment. One such company was the British Automatic Gramophone Co. Ltd., which held a licence from an American company to manufacture automatic selecting gramophones, which could play up to twenty selections, by choice, of 10-inch double-sided records, with needles changed automatically, and could be hand-operated or coin-fed.

Another venture was to take a controlling interest in Brownlac Ltd., makers of Brownlac, a synthetic substitute for shellac discovered by a Mr. Brownlow. The factory was at St. Margarets, Twickenham. Brownlac was supposedly satisfactory for Vocalion's record manufacture in experiments, but it proved a dismal failure when tried on a production run. A controlling interest was also taken in the Vincent Manufacturing Co. Ltd., which itself controlled the piano business of Rogers and Hopkinson. The responsibility for all these investments appears to have rested with Charles Knevyl Sugden, the Managing Director of the Vocalion companies.

September 1929 also saw Boots giving up Broadcast but Tomothy Whites, the other cash chemists, took them on for the first time. The word 'Broadcast' was belatedly applied for as a registered trade mark, claiming usage as from July 1927 (it was registered in April 1930). The Talking Machine News began mentioning the discs, probably on the strength of the two 10-inch series, which 'legitimised' the 8-inch size: no qualms had been felt over Edison Bell's Radios when they had appeared.

The £250,000 share capital of the company was increased by a further £100,000

after the A.G.M. of 1929, to enable the enterprise to enter the loudspeaker market and to make disc recordings for the cinema trade. A portable recording machine had been acquired for the purpose (the company already had a mobile recording unit) and the first recordings had been taken at the Grand Hotel, Eastbourne.

Although the parent company showed a profit of nearly £117,000, Vocalion (Foreign) was showing a loss of £16,000 since trading had begun in April 1928. In November 1929 the companies moved their offices back to Regent Street, at No. 227, and Managing Director Sugden was obliged to go to Australia to reorganise the business there. After two years of 40% dividends, at the 1930 A.G.M. there was not enough profit for any dividend to be paid. Reasons given for the poor results were the increase in royalties to composers, the depreciation of the company's investments elsewhere, the expenditure on experimental ventures (especially the 16-inch film discs) and the highly competitive nature of the business during the earlier part of the financial year. This last had since been largely overcome. The 10s. shares were being quoted at 6s.

In September 1930 the Managing Director lost his position and was also dismissed, or resigned, from the Boards of the associated companies. A new Board of Directors was advised that it might have a claim against Sugden. One third of the companies' assets were tied up in companies which showed little sign of profitability, thus immobilising the company's liquid resources. Brownlax had closed its factory and British Automatic Gramophones was in difficulties. By July 1930 Vocalion (Foreign) had a total loss of £31,000 and its directors were working without remuneration. The Australian subsidiary was sold off to a local company called Vocalion (Australia) Ltd., for £65,000, only £5,000 being in cash.

The above article, which will be concluded in our next issue, formed the subject of Frank Andrews' talk to the Society at the June Meeting at the Bloomsbury Institute. The talk was illustrated by slides and tape recordings of Broadcast records.

Members' attention is drawn to changes announced at the A.G.M., whereby all information for the Almanac should now be sent to Dave Roberts, and all Regional Reports to Mike Field (address in the A.G.M. report in this issue).

Members are asked also to remember to enclose a stamped addressed envelope with any letter to an Officer requiring a reply. It saves delays (and postage expenses to the Society) if letters are addressed to the right person: only articles for the magazine should be sent to the Editor, for example. The membership records, and despatch of the magazine, are in the capable hands of the Secretary, Dave Roberts, and all enquiries, changes of address etc. should be sent to him, NOT TO THE EDITOR.

Finally, the Officers and Committee of the Society would like to extend to all Members the Compliments of the Season and Wishes for good Hunting in the New Year.

THE PHONOFAIR

This year's Phonofair was staged by the Yorkshire branch of the Society on October 2nd and Cusworth Hall, near Doncaster, was the venue. The Hall, a country house now run as a museum by the local authority, provided a most attractive setting for the event, which was arranged to coincide with a two-week exhibition of phonographs and gramophones. Ian Cosens' white-painted Expert greeted visitors in the entrance hall, and beyond lay two rooms giving, in the one case, a good cross-section of machines from tinfoil to re-entrant, and in the other a display of machines mostly made in Yorkshire.

The latter were mainly table or cabinet grands of the 1920s, the sort of machines that traditionally have been overlooked by collectors; certainly, they often lack any real technical interest, being assembled from standard mechanical components in cases of variable quality. However, this 'local manufacture' theme introduces a new aspect and shows that there is something of interest in what may at first appear to be a rather uninspiring item. Among the Yorkshire gramophones we noted were two U-phones (which, like many German gramophones in the 1920s but few in this country, had wooden tone-arms), an Illingworth, an Artiste, three Gilberts and their poor relation the Geisha and a Perfectophone. What I did not see, but would have liked, was an Elsonphone, a Keighley product of which I am familiar with the soundbox alone.

Because of its museum location, this Phonofair was devoid of stalls offering goods for sale, a welcome relief for which I was grateful. However, in addition to the two exhibition rooms, which were open to the public, the Society had the use of a private lecture-room in the basement, with a kitchen in which to prepare refreshments and a further room in which were laid out the machines entered for the competition.

This was divided into two classes, for the best restored machine and the most original. Notable among the latter was a Class M phonograph, but the prize, awarded by ballot, went to a latish Zonophone horn machine belonging to John Astin, which was superbly original apart from a repaired winder and some gold lines which appeared to have been applied to the oak horn by the original owner. The prize for the best restored machine went to John Stannard, for a horn machine again but one of no particular identity; if not the most interesting machine in the show, it was undoubtedly the one on which most painstaking care had been expended and its honour was well deserved.

By way of entertainment, the lecture room was turned into a cinema for David Trigg, who comes from even further north but is well used to travelling, to present a film of his own compilation. This contained extracts from various period films of music hall stars, interspersed with commentary from the compiler in full-colour close-up. George Formby Junior, Gracie Fields and Gus Elen were among those we saw; by coincidence, the last-named turned up again at the AGM in London, transferred to video. Our thanks to Paul Austwick and his helpers for a delightful day-out!

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DOUBLE EDISON-BELL DISCS.

Will play on Gramophones, Discophones and all other "o'phones."

EDISON-BELL Justly Celebrated GOLD-MOULDED RECORDS.

Will play on All Phonographs, Graphophones, and CYLINDER Machines.

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Go to your dealer. Ask for Edison-Bell Records, submit to no Denial or Dictation, nor be put off with any foreign manufactured record.

PUBLIC EXCHANGE. — We offer an exchange with the public. New Records for old ones. All dealers have received notice that we have made arrangements advantageous alike to them and to their customers, by which any old record—CYLINDER or DISC—worn-out or cracked—may be taken in part exchange for an Edison-Bell NEW RECORD—CYLINDER or DISC.

TAKE YOUR OLD RECORDS, any make, to your Dealer and ask him to allow you for them—record for record—in exchange—thus clear your collection of "deadheads" and have new, bright, up-to-date enjoyable records for them.

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CHRYSTOL *Five-minute* RECORDS, *delayed by the above-mentioned cause,* ARE IN
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J. E. HOUGH, LTD., Proprs.

Correspondence

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

With the onset of the festive season may I beg the freedom of your columns to make an appeal on behalf of those unfortunates who inhabit the darker side of our hobby? I refer to the large numbers of gramopholics for whom Christmas will be just another day of slavery to the cylinder and the disc.

It is sad and ironic that in this so-called liberated age grampholism is still regarded by Society as a vice, or at best as an unhealthy preoccupation with reproduction. Doctors know that it is a disease, capable of ensnaring anybody, and although those most at risk are middle-aged males, teenage addiction is increasing. Early mild addiction usually goes altogether unremarked by family and friends. Nobody objects to an occasional portable gramophone: even two will not excite comment (unless, of course, they are both the same). But the condition will deteriorate unless those close to the patient can recognise the symptoms while he is still able to respond to treatment. Tell-tale signs are sewing-machine oil on the hand-towels, and the interjection into everyday conversation of wild disjointed phrases which sound like "Peter Pan the Pixie Gripper".

Without treatment the condition degenerates, commonly by gradual degrees into the chronic state, but occasionally with great rapidity into the acute form, known as Galloping Phonomania or Edison's Sillynderome. A symptom of this condition is encrustations of mildew on the palms of the hands. The patient experiences an uncontrollable desire for the unorthodox, and may be observed haunting the localities of Belgravia and South Kensington in search of increasingly exotic apparatus with which to satisfy his warped desires. All too often this quest for the bizarre culminates in his descent into the state of psycho-Pathé, after which pass there can, of course, be no salvation for him.

The more familiar chronic grampholic may be recognised by his inability to discuss anything but talking machines, by his inexorable determination to possess as many of them as he can, and by the journeys he will undertake to secure them; no distance is too great for him. As the years pass, ever-larger talking machines in ever-increasing numbers become necessary to still his craving. Paradoxically, his general health and deportment appear to remain unimpaired, apart from the need (as with some bone deficiencies) to move about slowly and carefully for fear of breaking something. Eventually, however, the strain on the system takes its toll, and he succumbs to severe overcrowding of the premises.

Little can be done to help these chronic cases apart from such palliative action as providing silver-grey carpeting, which matches exactly the colour of the graphited grease trodden into it daily. But many sufferers are still within reach of help, and for them "Gramopholics Anonymous" centres are opening in many parts of the U.K. For details simply write to any of the addresses to be found on the back of this maga-

zine.

And so to my appeal. If you would like to bring happiness this Yuletide to an afflicted person, send your contribution to me. No gift is too large or too small; anything from an Auxetophone to a Mikiphone will be received with gratitude. If necessary I can collect. Any distance.

Yours sincerely,

Ted Cunningham.

Dear Sir,

At the invitation of George Frow (People, Paper and Things, October) I thought the following recollection may be of interest.

As George says, it is a pity it's always the passing of an artist we have to note and not their introduction. On Sunday September 26th, our local paper announced the death at 67 of Lady Audley - Sarah, the second daughter of Sir Winston Churchill and former wife of comedian Vic Oliver.

Whether she was a regular in the British record catalogues of the 1930s or not I do not know; this does not seem to be the case over here, but she did make an appearance as the foil for Vic Oliver on his circa 1937 Columbia record of 'Knock, Knock, Who's there?'. This was issued locally as DO1663.

If you are not familiar with the disc, it concerns Oliver trying to explain to his dumb wife how to play the famous game, and it is not until the end of the record that she gets the delivery correct, by which time he has forgotten the punch-line!

It's a quaintly rambling record but I think it is one of the most humorous in my collection and it hasn't yet failed to raise a smile or two on the face of anyone to whom it has been played.
Brisbane, Australia.

Yours sincerely, Frank James.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF THE CLOCKWORK ACOUSTIC - M. John

The first gramophone I ever saw belonged to a cousin of mine. I had three cousins serving during the first World War, two with the land forces and the third and eldest, Tommy, some twelve years my senior, with the R.N. On cessation of hostilities, Tommy resumed his previous occupation as a smallholder.

Needing some form of relaxation after his hectic days at sea, Tommy invested a considerable amount of his gratuity on a gramophone and a selection of records. In

those days prior to wireless broadcasting, there was a growing demand for 'potted entertainment' in the countryside. Consequently, Tommy was often invited to isolated farmhouses in the district, to provide a musical evening.

Farmers who played host would send their gigs to collect his equipment, and often deliver it to his next venue. News of his progress would reach us from time to time. "He was at so-and-so's last night, and a grand time we had."

At last our turn came to receive him; it was to be New Year's Eve, 1919. A large crate containing machine and records was delivered in the afternoon. Invitations to friends and neighbours had been sent out. My parents had prepared a plentiful supply of 'home-brewed' beer and home-baked cake.

Soon after dark the guests began to assemble. The communicating doors between the front rooms of our house were thrown open. Upon Tommy's arrival the unpacking and assembling of the machine proceeded. It had a large tin floral horn and a straight tone-arm. An inquisitive eight-year-old, I took my stand in the room where the gramophone was installed. I became interested in records with a dog listening in, but was warned against handling them. I transferred my attention to the soundbox as it travelled across the disc, on pointing to the stylus bar I was told it was a 'magnet' for drawing the sound from the record. So much for the technical knowledge of the day.

Tommy's repertoire consisted of popular songs of the period, sentimental and comic. One tune in particular went down well with the company - 'Another little drink wouldn't do us any harm'. When the glasses needed replenishing they would break out into the chorus, which was a signal for my mother to circulate with the jug.

Apart from a short break at midnight to wish each other the compliments of the season, the concert went on till the small hours. Our guests were 'well oiled' before it finally broke up, and two in particular had imbibed so freely that they thought it prudent to seek the security of the hay barn, rather than attempt the homeward journey on unsteady legs. Next day being a holiday, they were seen making a furtive departure in the forenoon.

Pleasant childhood memories - thanks to the C. L. P. G. S., some of us old-timers can occasionally recapture those "hours of gladness, gone alas like our youth too soon."

M. John.

("Another Little Drink" - The Bing Boys, Columbia 12" 9003).

STAR gramophones (opposite page) came from Hawthorne and Sheble, of Chicago. Whether they were actual manufacturers or had them made under contract, we would like to hear from one of our Stateside Members. Were Hawthorne and Sheble in liquidation in 1909? The 'Superior manufacture' referred to in the blurb is no mere adman's fantasy, by the way.

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THIS
SEASON.**



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These are well-known Instruments. They have only one fault.—They have been too expensive. We are offering them this season only at

ONE HALF THEIR STANDARD PRICE.

The superior manufacture and finish of these superb machines rendered them unable to compete against the flood of inferior cheap but nice-looking Continental productions, consequently we have purchased the

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Of various types and values to suit all purses,

EVERYONE BRAND NEW and BEAUTIFULLY FINISHED.

This explains our offer. It is an opportunity to all who wish to purchase a Disc Machine which will play all Discaphone, Gramophone, Zenophone or any other "ophone" records—which will never occur again, and will last only so long as the above remains unsold.

AND DO NOT FORGET

THE EDISON BELL DISCS ARE THE BEST VALUE ON OFFER.

Up-to-date, smooth surface, loud, durable, musically sweet. Don't be influenced. Use your own judgment.

ASK YOUR DEALER

For full particulars and lists of Edison Bell Discs and Cylinder Records and all machines.

EDISON BELL, Edisonia Works, Glengall Road, London, S.E.

J. E. HUGH, LTD., Props.

In August this column mentioned early commercial broadcasting beamed to Britain up to the last war from places like Normandy, Paris, Luxemburg and elsewhere, and for about the first time in over 40 years the B. B. C. in October has at last admitted it existed, and put out a whole three-quarter hour programme, including many of the advertising songs, speech and jingles so familiar then. Would Sir John Reith have approved even now, were he alive? In those days a 70-80 per centage of Britons took their Sunday listening from the Continent, so dreary were the B. B. C. programmes. 90-year old Rex Staniforth was introduced, the oldest surviving disc jockey, although in his day this tomfool expression was years from being thought of and he might then have been termed a presenter; no other word seemed necessary. Another of the original team, Bob Danvers-Walker, took the listeners round the old studio building for his first return since 1940, and how refreshing it was to hear his gasps of recollection and comments on the changes, taped as he went. He recalled another method of putting out the recorded programmes using two 35mm film projectors, which the announcers had to lace up and run. This must have been an expensive way of recording, even in pre-war days. More long-ago broadcast material from the U.S. is becoming available for long-playing records now, although much of the B. B. C.'s is said to be not usable for contract or copyright reasons. The old continental radio broadcasts may in due time constitute a source of excellent dance band and light orchestral music later this decade.

Notable progress has been made by the partnership of Duncan Miller and Paul Morris in producing quality 2-minute cylinder blanks, and these records have acquitted themselves well during recent demonstrations. Miller-Morris have since started to produce Concert blanks. In a recent interview they promised pre-recorded sound cylinders soon with a variety of novelty records including "The Song of Mister Phonograph", and are bringing their technical knowledge to bear on setting up for moulded sound cylinders. Apparently the availability of newer materials makes the process a little easier than it was eighty years ago, but at the same time one which few would want to jump into lightly.

Recent acquisition of some Frank Crumit 78 Victor records from an American friend has disclosed something that is revealed to us for the first time, but probably known to more observant collectors. Among the Victors were two sides that appeared in the United Kingdom on H. M. V., but both the H. M. V. sides are dubbings. These are:

Victor 21735-A "A Gay Caballero", which appeared as
H. M. V. B 3054 - Matrix No. A 47383ΔTI

and

Victor 22154-A "Return of the Gay Caballero"
H. M. V. B 3269 - Matrix No. A 56163ΔTI

Both the H. M. V. couplings are Crumit songs and have the original Victor catalogue number impressed, also in the VE ellipse, and are obviously taken from an original

matrix. On both the dubbed H. M. V. sides the groove area is fractionally extended towards the centre. Could the addition of the letters TI mean Transferred Impression? Perhaps a member who knows all about this sort of recording could enlighten us? From recent findings it is known that Edison used disc-to-disc transfers when masters wore, and this method may have been the answer for meeting the demand for big-selling records generally, when good early pressings often have greater clarity than later ones. With reference again to the British-sold Crumits, the two in question seem to be the only such transfers in a fairly comprehensive - but incomplete - British collection.

The matter of who was the oldest (earliest born) who had recorded arose with a member as short time ago, and he plumped for firstly Lord Tennyson (August 1809 - 1892), followed by a whisker - or two - by Gladstone (December 1809 - 98). Both were prominent Britons, but there could have been other more ordinary mortals here, or in the United States, who, as octogenarians or nonogenerians committed their voices to tinfoil in 1878 or to the Perfected Phonograph ten years later, men or women born in the 18th century. Of these it seems unlikely we shall ever know more, but somebody of extreme maturity might just have overlapped Mozart (1756 - 1791), and a number of early recorders certainly came within the lifespan of Napoleon (1769 - 1821) or King George III (1738 - 1820). This is a game that can go on for a long time and is better suited to an intellectual gathering round that tree on the 25th. A further party game for the confident record collector to suggest to his friends is the highest number of conductors starting with the letter K. There are dozens and dozens and dozens.

It's not very clear why the chocolate record has attracted manufacturers from time to time from Stollwerck onwards, but an American friend has kindly sent details of yet another, and appropriate to the Season. This is a $4\frac{1}{2}$ oz. disc of milk chocolate "grooved, labelled and slipped into an 'album' decorated with the Season's special message", and is of "a Christmas carol with a very sweet melody". From this ambiguous sales talk it seems highly improbable that like the Stollwerck these records can be "played" for even one occasion, but for anyone interested in the unusual they cost \$5.95 each, \$21.95 for four and \$42.95 for eight, all for one address, from Figis Inc., Marshfield, Wisconsin 5449, U.S.A.

We are grateful for the following publications received from friends over the year: De Weergever (Journal of the Dutch Phonograph and Gramophone Society),

[redacted] Amsterdam, Holland.

Gilbertian Gossip (G. and S. productions U.K. and overseas), c/o Michael Walters, British Museum of Natural History, Tring, Herts, England.

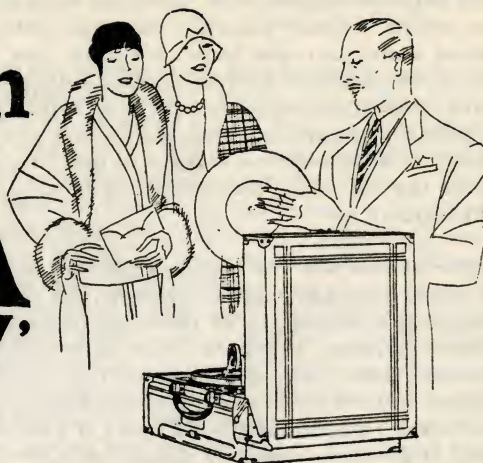
Jerry's Musical News (mainly phonograph, gramophone and record adverts), [redacted] Edina, MN 55424, U.S.A.

The (quarterly) Journal of the Vintage Light Music Society, [redacted] West Wickham, Kent, England.

Auction Lists of Original Record and Phonograph Literature, from Tim Brooks, [redacted] Floral Park, New York 11001, U.S.A.

Members interested in any of the above are asked to write to the addresses given.

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WHEN choosing a new record say this. Because only on the new Decca will you hear all the record.

The new electrical recordings contain bass notes which only the new Decca can reproduce in perfect tone, with perfect clarity.

They call it "the musician's instrument," and lovers of fine music, who listen to the new Decca, will find ample justification for the description.

But jazz music, which depends so much on the rhythm, created mainly by the bass notes of the drums, sousaphone and, sometimes, double bass,

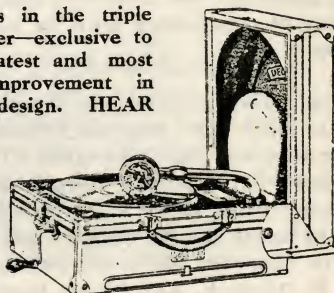
becomes more real, more vibrant, more compelling, played on the new Decca.

The secret is in the triple sound chamber—exclusive to Decca—the latest and most important improvement in gramophone design. **HEAR IT TO-DAY.**

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Sole Manufacturers—Barnett Samuel & Sons Ltd. (Established 1832.)



5: HE WAS VERY KIND TO ME.

It all began in a dusty old decaying junk-shop many years ago. I had obtained a brass-horned Edison Standard phonograph, and with it came a woodwormed tea chest full of mildewed wax cylinder records bearing the legendary name of 'Thoams Edison' on the boxes. I remember thinking that when I got home the whole lot would be fit only for the dustbin. But determined not to be outdone, I worked on that old phonograph night and day for six months until it came to life again. My reward came on a cold winter evening when I heard my very first wax cylinder record - and what a warm thrill it gave me when a spoken announcement blasted forth from the battered twisted horn: "He was very kind to me, sung by Harry Lauder, Edison Rec/ Rec/ Rec/ Rec/ Record!" And so on a badly worn and very chipped cylinder, the great Scottish minstrel entered my life for a short two minutes on a primitive recording made in far-away 1907. It was this recording which first opened the golden doors into the world of Victorian and Edwardian music hall records, which has been my main interest ever since. I will always be grateful to the magic voice of Harry Lauder, who inspired me with so much enthusiasm, and started me on the road in search of the music hall of yesteryear - Harry Lauder - He was very kind to ME!

It was in November 1907 that Harry Lauder made his first cylinder records for Edison (he had made some earlier ones for Pathé): these cylinders were issued early in 1903, and by September of that year the Edison company were reporting in advertisements that "We are working the Lauder cylinder moulds to the limit". It went on to advise dealers to hold the entire stocks of Lauder selections. On February 6th 1906 Harry Lauder visited the Orange, New Jersey factory complex of Thomas Edison. He met several officials of the world-wide Edison companies. In November 1909 Thomas Edison wrote a publicity letter in praise of the Lauder recordings to all his dealers:

"Harry Lauder is now in America again, your city may not be on the Morris circuit, but it is on the EDISON CIRCUIT. Not for 20 weeks either, but perennially. Harry Lauder works as Industriously, if indirectly, for the Edison dealer, as he does for Mr. Morris. Harry Lauder is a magic name, why not start to conure with it NOW!

Harry Lauder certainly knew that his voice was the best publicity machine in the world. I went on a pilgrimage in search of the legendary Sir Harry some years ago and found (of course!) that this required going to Scotland!

Harry Lauder was born in 1870 (the same year as another famous music hall artist, Marie Lloyd) and Lauder's birthplace cottage still stands in Bridge Street, Portobello, a seaside town adjoining Edinburgh. His personal worldwide successes and the places he visited are too numerous to mention in full in this allotted space. I found his last home, Lauder Hall, near Strathaven, Lanarkshire, had now been turned into a welfare home for old people, and in Hamilton I found the end of his road in the Bent Cemetery where he was buried in 1950. It appears that the great character

comedian-entertainer slipped from the public memory for nearly 30 years until recently. Now every year on his birthdate (August 4th) his home town of Portobello comes to life with an annual Lauder Festival founded by the local Sir Harry Lauder and the Portobello Tourism Development Association. I have been honoured on a number of occasions to be present as a guest at the Festival, presenting displays in Portobello Town Hall and other music hall ephemera. And I have had the pleasure of giving recitals of the Edison (and Pathé) Lauder cylinders to visitors and admirers of Lauder's work. Critics say that Lauder left the image of the kilted bow-legged mean Scot, yet few people attack Will Fyffe for leaving us with the picture of the merry drunk-on-a-Saturday-night Glaswegian. Fyffe followed the classical model of the character song interspersed with spoken patter, and from what other Scots have told me he seems to have been more highly regarded than Lauder. My own view is that although Fyffe's singing was pleasant and more than adequate, and his songs were more 'nearer' to world problems, he lacked the melodious sentimentality and lyrical quality which made Lauder's contribution unforgettably individual and charming. There I rest my case. (Perhaps I'm trying to be kind to Sir Harry - remembering that he was very kind to ME!)

London Meeting

JULY

Firstly, our apologies to the presenter, Mike Field, for the lateness of this report. The reporter himself is entirely to blame, and hopes he will be forgiven.

Mike Field talked to us about restoring phonographs. We were shown how transfers can be made, using a photographic process, taken from quite large drawings, and reduced to match the size of the original transfers. The process (described in the Technical Forum article in last February's HIL L A N D A L E) uses 'Scotchcal' materials, available in kit form. It was demonstrated on an Edison Gem, where it was used to reproduce the gold 'GEM' transfer on the front. The gold lines were produced with gold paint in a draftsman's pen, and a good deal of experimenting was necessary to get the consistency of the paint right.

Mike showed us the Gem in various stages of restoration: one side was left rusty, one side cleaned, another smoothed and filled and the fourth painted and polished.

Attention was then turned to the woodwork. Chemico household cleanser was recommended at the first stage, to get rid of the dirt. Worm holes can be filled with bits of old cylinder wax melted and worked in, then smoothed off. For reproducing the green tint of 1901-5 Edison models, Cuprinol can be used. Polyurethane varnish can then be applied, and its newness can be toned down by rubbing with steel wool and then polishing with wax. Old clocks and Meccano sets were suggested as possible sources of gears, and dull nickel, without brightener should be specified from the platers': it can be polished afterwards with metal polish. New brass can be 'aged' by exposure to ammonia fumes, and iron by leaving in the garden and then treating with phosphoric acid. We all enjoyed this most interesting practical demonstration.



David Snelling attended the Annual Meeting of the Music Box Society International in San Francisco in September, and found some phonographs among the musical boxes on display. Above is a general view of some of them (funny how phonograph displays look much the same the world over); below is a combined musical box and gramophone (a hybrid breed which never really caught on in Europe) and an Edison coin-slot model using a 'Standard' mechanism.



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